

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Claims 1 and 3-18 were pending. By this Amendment, Claims 4, 8, and 14 have been canceled, without prejudice, and Claims 1, 7, 13, and 15 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced. Therefore, after entry of this Amendment, Claims 1, 3, 5-8, 9-13, and 15-18 will be currently pending.

In the Office Action mailed March 27, 2008, Claims 4-6, 8, 10-12, 14-16, and 18 were objected but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Claims 1, 7, and 13 have been amended to include the allowable features of Claims 4, 8, and 14, respectively. Based on such amendments, amended Claims 1, 7, and 13 are now in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and a prompt allowance of these claims are respectfully requested.

As amended Claims 1, 7, 13 are allowable, Claims 3, 9, and 17 are likewise allowable at least due to their dependencies from allowable independent claims.

CONCLUSION

For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now pending patentability distinguish the present invention from the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fee for this extension may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 01-2300. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 01-2300 with reference to Attorney Docket No. **107156-00331**.

Respectfully submitted,



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